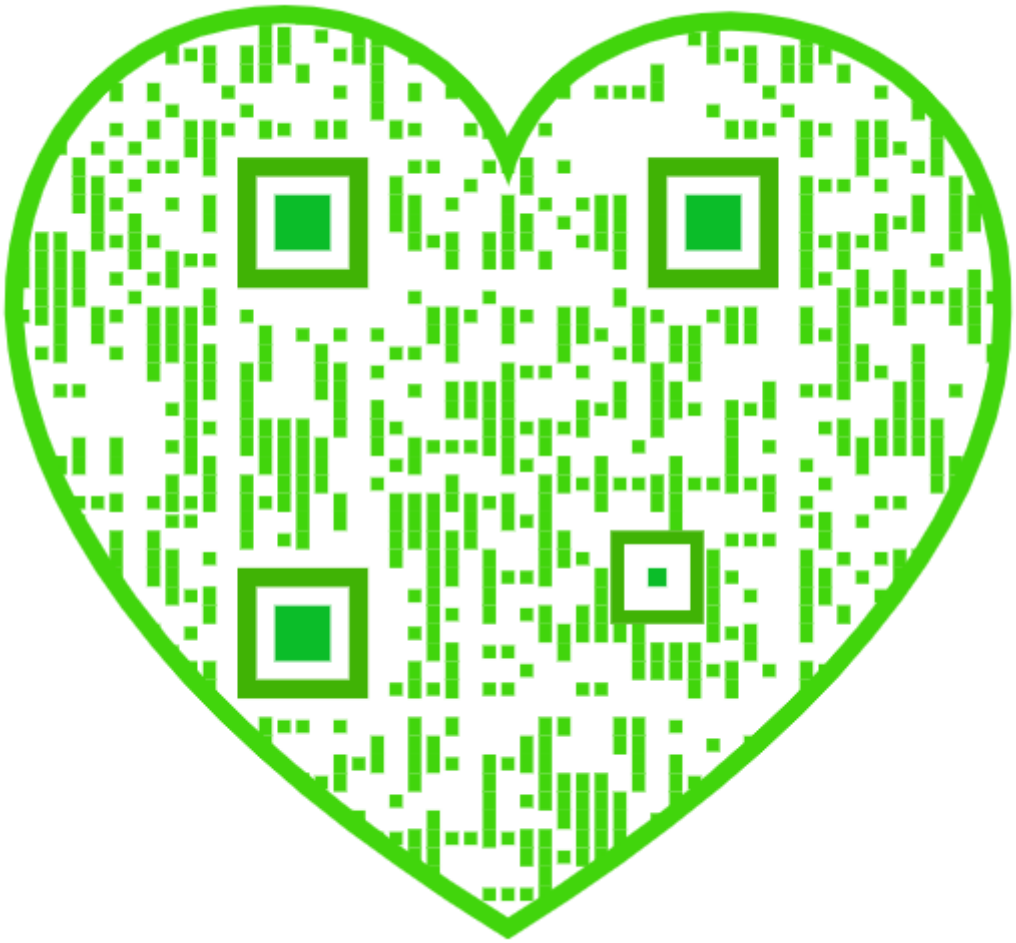
SH
439
M43hp

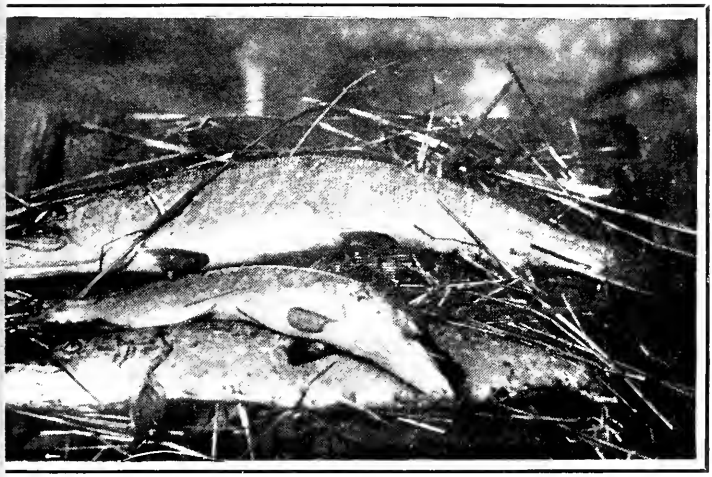
AA
000 972 698
5
UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

By A. R. MATTHEWS

Editor of "The Angler's News," and author of "How to Catch Coarse Fish"



A GOOD LEASH OF PIKE *H. Whiffin*

Ninepence Net

J. PEEK & SON

WHOLESALE, RETAIL AND EXPORT

Fishing Rod and Tackle Manufacturers

40 GRAY'S INN ROAD (Close to Holborn), LONDON, W.C.

	£	s.	d.
Best Split Cane Pike Rod, 2 tops, Division Bag, Rubber Button	4	10	0
Best Greenheart Pike Rod, 2 tops, Division Bag, Rubber Button	3	0	0
Ditto only Whole Cane Butt and Joint, Greenheart Tops	2	10	0

	4 in.	4½ in.	
Wood Check Reels	9/-		each.
Wood Centre Pin Reels	18/-	20/6	,,

	Fine	Med.	Stout	
Waterproof Silk	22/6	32/6	44/6	100 yds.
Best Undressed Silk	10/6	12/6	16/3	,,

Pike Traces . . . . . 9d. each.

Jardine Snaps . . . . . 6d. ,,

"Tackle that is worth Fishing with."

BRISTOL, *July 1st*, 1920.

Dear Sir,

Had *four* Carp—8½ lbs., 5 lbs., 5 lbs., 4½ lbs.—yesterday on No. 9 Side Twist Hooks; they hooked and held well. R.L.

WEST BROMWICH, *June 16th*, 1920.

Sir,

I landed a lovely Bream on one of your 760, 1 yd. Bottoms, No. 14 Hooks, 6x Gut, from the Severn, at Bewdley, weight 5 lbs. 10z., which proved the worth of Tackle. Yours truly, S.S.

DEANSGATE, MANCHESTER, *June*, 1920.

Dear Sir,

You will be pleased to know that in the English Championship I was the third individual with 6 lbs. 2 ozs., the only one in this town to get so near the Championship before, and best part of my Team fish with similar Tackle from you, and we finished 4th position as a Team for the Cup, with 10 lbs. 14¾ ozs., for the Northern Anglers' Association, and I was Captain of the Team. Yours faithfully, J.R.

No. 8 Catalogue, Price SIXPENCE,

Credited off FIRST ORDER of Ten Shillings, by COUPON.

ALBERT SMITH & CO.

(ALBERT SMITH, Proprietor),

(M.P.), Dominion Works, Redditch, England.

DIRECT ONLY. ***NO AGENTS.***

HOW TO CATCH PIKE

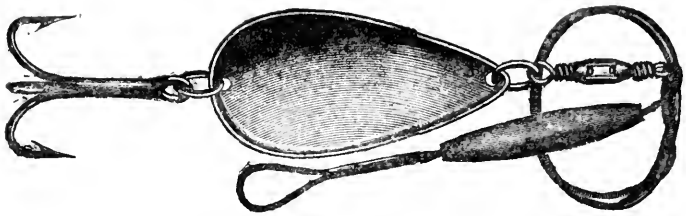
BY

A. R. MATTHEWS

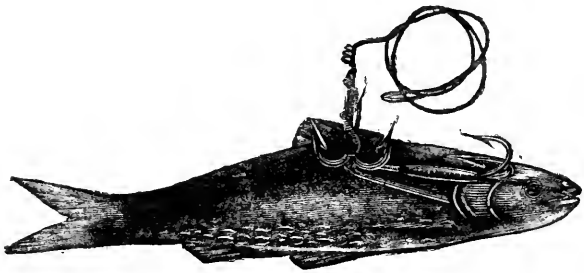
EDITOR OF "THE ANGLER'S NEWS"

PUBLISHED AT THE OFFICES OF "COUNTRY LIFE," 20, TAVISTOCK STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.2, AND BY GEORGE NEWNES, LTD., 8–11, SOUTHAMPTON STREET, STRAND, W.C.2. NEW YORK: CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

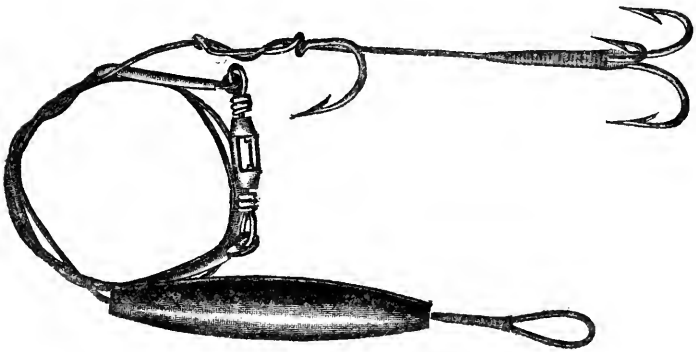
1921



SPOON-BAIT, WITH SWIVEL AND LEAD.



BAIT ON JARDINE SNAP-TACKLE.



A 4-HOOK LIVE-BAIT TACKLE.

We are indebted to Messrs. S. ALLCOCK & Co., LTD., wholesale fishing-tackle manufacturers, Redditch, for the illustrations of tackle.

SH
-121
M1-4p

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PIKE POINTS	5
PIKE FISHING	7
THE ANGLER'S "BIG GAME"	7
MONSTERS OF THE PAST	8
HOME OF THE "ENGLISH" 40-50-POUNDER	11
THE PIKE'S MENU	11
WHERE TO FIND PIKE	13
THE PIKE FISHER'S OUTFIT	19
RODS	19
REELS	20
LINES	20
TRACES	22
HOW TO CATCH PIKE	22
METHODS OF ANGLING	22
BAITS	22
SPINNING—THE "WOBBLE" SPIN	24
THE WAY TO CAST	26
LIVE-BAITING	28
PUTTING THE LIVE-BAIT ON	29
PATERNOSTERING	30
LEGERING	31

908878

HOW TO CATCH PIKE

PIKE POINTS

PIKE often stay in one particular lair for a long time.

After a big flood, try slack water off which a fast stream is running.

Pike know they will get a good dinner in the slack where other fish have taken refuge from the swift stream.

Tread lightly on the bank when approaching a known pike lair.

Try for pike directly a river or lake begins to clear. The fish are often ravenous then.

Spin right up to the edge—a pike may lurk under any bunch of sedges or weeds.

Always see that your reel runs freely and is in perfect order. Keep it well cleaned and oiled.

Touch up the point of the gaff from time to time with a file.

If a landing-net is used, it must be large and strong and be well sunk before your fish is brought over it.

Place your bait-can in the water while fishing—it keeps the baits fresh and lively—but see that it is safely attached to the bank by a piece of cord.

A mill-dam is often a good place for a pike.

Don't spin too fast, but endeavour to impart to your lure the appearance of a fish trying to escape from its voracious foe.

Be careful not to put your fingers in a pike's mouth !

Carry a disgorger, gag, and "priest," or short knobbed stick, the two latter implements to give the pike his quietus.

Artificial baits may be carried in a wallet or bait-box.

Preserved natural baits—dace, gudgeon, minnows, and sprats—are sold in bottles by tackle dealers. (These are especially useful in the winter, when perhaps anglers have no opportunity of catching their own bait.)

PIKE FISHING

The Angler's "Big Game"

Pike are the "big game" of the so-called "coarse" fish, and they have always been a very popular quarry with anglers, for the fish run large, frequent many kinds of water, and often afford exciting sport. Long years ago—even as long back as the middle of the fourth century—these fish, we are told, attracted considerable attention, though they were probably not taken spinning and live-baiting—to-day's principal methods of capture by anglers. But the pike was referred to as—

> The wary luce 'midst wrack and rushes hid.

Therefore, his haunts were evidently well known in those days, and we can picture attempts at his capture with spears, snares, and various kinds of traps—if not with a split-cane or greenheart rod! As time wore on, trimmering and angling for pike was indulged in. Baked pike frequently appeared on the tables of the jolly old angling monks. The fish were kept for food in special stews on gentlemen's estates, and Walton and the top-hatted anglers who followed him, sought for the game and voracious pike "'midst wrack and rushes hid."

Pike fishing is now what old piscatorial writers would have described as one of the "most fashion-

able" branches of the sport, and, despite the enormous number of captures which are made every year, many waters can still boast of a plentiful stock of the fresh-water sharks.

The best of the pike fishing may be said to come in with pheasant shooting—in October; but pike are, of course, legally killable on the rod from June 16 to March 14, the angling season for coarse fish. I have seen plump, good-conditioned pike caught in the leafy month, and at other times during the summer; but, as a rule, anglers are then too much occupied with roach and bream and barbel and chub to bring out their pike tackle. There is another reason why summer fishing for pike is little indulged in. River and lake at this period of the year are often in a very weedy condition, and aquatic vegetation generally abounds, and as pike frequently have their lairs amid surroundings of this kind, angling operations in the form of spinning and live-baiting are considerably handicapped.

The autumn and winter is undoubtedly the favourite time with anglers for expeditions after the mighty luce, and then, too, pike are in their best condition.

The weeds have decayed or been washed away by "freshes" and floods, and the pike goes forth to seek new quarters, a description of which will be found elsewhere.

MONSTERS OF THE PAST

Pike live long and reach a large size; but, so far as English waters are concerned, a 40-pounder has yet to be brought to bank. The nearest approach to this

coveted weight is a 39 lb. pike, which is stated to have been netted a few years back in the Stour, near Christchurch, Hampshire. I saw this fish in the flesh, and its capture created tremendous interest in angling circles. There was no doubt as to its weight. Prior to the capture of this huge pike, a 37 lb. specimen had been landed from the Wye in Herefordshire. Concerning large "English" pike, the late Mr. Alfred Jardine, who specialized in pike fishing, long held the record for these fish with a grand specimen of 37 lb., caught at Amersham (Bucks) on September 4, 1879. I remember a monster pike of 39 lb. being captured in the Arun, at Stopham, near Pulborough. Among big Thames pike I may mention four notable fish, three of which, weighing $28\frac{3}{4}$ lb., 28 lb., and $27\frac{3}{4}$ lb., were taken at Great Marlow. Near Oxford a 26 lb. pike was once landed; but in 1907 these great fish were excelled by one of 29 lb., taken in the Hinksey Backwater, Oxford, by Mr. E. J. Bowles. I believe this fish to be the largest authenticated pike caught in the Thames.

Numerous pike of from 30 lb. to 35 lb. have been caught in the Irish lakes and rivers—undoubtedly Ireland is the big pike country—and authenticated fish of over this weight have been landed, one of 42 lb. being recorded in *The Angler's News* in 1909. This huge fish was taken in Lough Derg by a professional fisherman named John Monoghan, while trailing with a herring mounted on a big spinning flight. The pike was weighed by an R.I.C. sergeant, who was also the local inspector of weights and measures. A spent salmon of about 4 lb. was found in the pike's inside. It was 3 ft. 7 in. long, and had a girth of 2 ft. 8 in.

*

In July 1920 a monster pike of 53 lb. was captured on Lough Conn (Ireland) by Mr. John Garvin—a remarkable fish for size. It had a salmon in its inside. The weight of this pike, which was taken on a spoon-bait, was authenticated, and a reward of £10 10*s.*, offered for years by Mr. R. B. Marston, editor of the *Fishing Gazette*, for a pike of 50 lb. or over, was claimed and paid to its captor.

But all the big Irish pike seem to pale before the Kenmure Castle monster, taken many years ago, and said by Daniel to have weighed 72 lb., but there appears to be no record as to whether the fish was captured by an angler, secured on a set line, or netted.

In the year 1843 a giant pike was on view at a Piccadilly fishmonger's. It was a very long fish, and was ticketed to weigh 69½ lb. !

I have already mentioned the authenticated weights of several Thames pike of exceptional size, but I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the weights of two fish from that river, recorded by Dr. R. Brookes, in his *Art of Angling*, published over 100 years ago. The old angler says :

" The pike is a very voracious fish, and often grows to an enormous size. In a ditch near Wallingford two were caught, one of which, being the milter, weighed 51 lb., and the spawner 57 lb. The ditch runs into the Thames, and they retired thither in order to spawn."

I have not the slightest doubt of the presence to-day of some exceptionally large pike in the deep upper reaches of the Thames, but I fear I cannot hold out much prospect of any of my readers getting a brace scaling 108 lb. !

There are monster pike lurking in some of the deep lochs in Scotland, but anglers pay little heed to them, with so many salmon and trout in their midst.

Home of the "English" 40-50-Pounder

It is more than probable that the much-sought-after 40 lb. *English* pike will turn up on the Norfolk Broads. I never visit this famous angling ground without feeling that, somewhere hidden on one of these expansive, rush-fringed pieces of water, is the long-looked-for great pike—indeed, I sometimes believe that a 50 lb. pike may lurk there. The Broads are just the place to give a home to pike of monster size, with their miles of water, forests of rushes, reeds, and weeds, numerous little secluded lagoons into which no angler can penetrate with his boat, and an abundance of natural food.

There are several rivers which from their fame for holding big pike also suggest themselves to me as being likely places for the undiscovered 40-50-pounder —I refer to the Avon and Stour in Hampshire, the Arun in Sussex, and the Wye in Herefordshire.

A reward of £10 10*s*. is offered by *The Angler's News* for a pike of 50 lb. or over caught in fair rod and line angling in *English* waters in 1921.

THE PIKE'S MENU

Pike have always borne the reputation of being extremely voracious and gluttonous fish.

The angler, when seeking their capture, generally

baits with a dace, roach, or other small fish, all of which are caught and devoured by the pike when on feeding excursions, but their menu is by no means confined to fish. Nothing that moves in or on the water escapes the crafty eyes of the fierce and stealthy water-wolf from his place of hiding in some deep pool or mass of weeds and sedges. He is no respecter of fish, fur, or feather. One of his own kind (the pike is a dreadful cannibal), a fluffy little duckling, or waterhen chick, or a water rat—all are included in the pike's larder. Large pike at times do not hesitate to seize wild ducks and other waterfowl, and it is said that they have been known to grab drinking cattle by the nose. There have also been stories of bathers being attacked by big pike, but I have never been able properly to authenticate them. In one instance, however, there appears to be some reason to believe that a boy was bitten by a pike near Norwich a few years ago. As far as I can remember, he was bathing in a pond, when a large pike darted out from the side and inflicted a wound on his leg.

The peculiarities of the pike's taste are referred to by a certain old scholastic divine, who assures us that the pike is particularly fond of :

"A swan's head and shoulders, a mule's lip, a Polish damsel's foot, a gentleman's hand, tender kittens before their eyes are opened, and the fleshy parts of a calf's head."

I think I must try spinning with a dead kitten !

In an old book I read the following :

"A pike catched in Barn-Meer (a large standing water in Cheshire) was an ell long, and weighed 35 lb. ;

it was presented to Lord Cholmondeley, who ordered it to be put into a canal in the garden, wherein were abundance of several sorts of fish. About twelve months after his lordship drawed the canal, and found that this overgrown pike had devoured all the fish except one large carp, that weighed between nine and ten pounds, and that was bitten in several places. The pike was then put into the canal again, together with abundance of fish with him to feed upon, all which he devoured in less than a year's time; and was observed by the gardener and workman there to take ducks, and other water-fowl, under water; whereupon they shot magpies and crows and threw them into the canal, which the pike took before their eyes; of this they acquainted their lord, who thereupon ordered the slaughterman to fling in calves bellies, chicken guts, and such like garbage to him to prey upon; but being soon after neglected, he died, as supposed, for want of food."

Sad, wasn't it?

WHERE TO FIND PIKE

He loves no streams, but hugs the silent deeps,
And eats all hours, and yet no house he keeps.

In February and March pike begin seriously to think of their domestic duties—of the breeding season—and later on, according to the state of the water and weather, they work into backwaters, dykes, brooklets, and other similar places connected with the main river or a lake, and there deposit their spawn. A female pike in good condition will shed many thousands of eggs; Buckland has placed it on record that

a pike of 28 lb. examined by him contained 292,320 eggs. The roe (eggs) weighed 21 oz. A 32 lb. pike had 595,200 eggs, the roe scaling 5 lb. I mention these particulars for two reasons: to show how extraordinarily prolific pike are, and ask a question, "What becomes of all these eggs?" Each egg in the ordinary course of nature is an infantile pike; but if only a few hundreds of the eggs hatch out, all I can say is that I have never, in the course of my long angling experience, met with what I could rightly describe as a shoal of pike fry. The most I have seen together have been about twenty minnow-sized pikelets. I have also noticed, here and there, two or three pike about the size of a cigar fairly close together, so what, I again ask, becomes of all the eggs and fry, supposing that a fair proportion of the ova hatches out? Pike often deposit their spawn on the top of weeds just under the surface—I have found it there on several occasions—and my idea is that a great deal of it is consumed by waterfowl and predatory aquatic insects. I have also a grave suspicion that Mr. and Mrs. Pike indulge in a diet of pike eggs and pike fry!

The male and female pike remain for a considerable time on the spawning grounds and then seek their usual haunts in river and lake, there to recuperate. They are very much out of condition, and in many instances are not fit for the basket or table until September has arrived. Much depends on environment. I have caught pike in a river with a gravelly bottom in perfect condition at the end of June, while other pike landed from sluggish rivers or still waters have been very thin and flabby.

October is a good month, as a rule, in which to put one's pike tackle together.

Pike haunts and "hides" are many, and vary according to the time of year and the state of the water. Izaak Walton has well described the pike as "a solitary, melancholy, and bold fish," for rarely are more than two seen together, but occasionally during a heavy flood, when rivers are like mill-races, pike will collect in a quiet corner or a lay-by out of the rush and swirl of the main stream. I have known many pike to be caught in such spots in the Thames and Great Ouse. In times of flood, or when a river is very high, a particularly favourite place with pike is below a lock or in the mouth of a backwater. The tail end of an island is another good spot under most conditions of weather and water, providing the stream is fairly placid and deep.

In the summer months, pike resort to the weed and sedge beds, where they lie in wait of passing prey. They also conceal themselves under overhanging clay banks, where grass and other herbage is pretty thick and helps to hide them from view, but eventually they often reveal their presence to the angler by darting forth and leaving a trail of mud in their wake. The angler should at once try for the disturbed fish, casting out in the direction it has taken, and if not successful it is a good plan to mark down the exact spot where the pike was "in residence," and visit it later on. If a river is the scene the live-bait can perhaps be allowed to quietly drift down past the lair, or in the case of a canal or lake be gently dropped in just over the waving grasses. Then be prepared for squalls! The spinner can also be tried, but the angler must

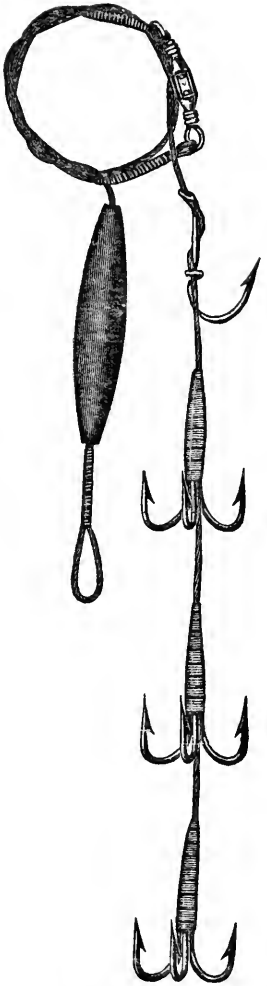
go about the business with the stealthiness of a Red Indian.

Pike frequently retire a good distance back in the weeds and sedges, only venturing forth when impelled by hunger, and it is not a bad plan, if they are get-at-able, to drive the pike out into the open and try a live-bait or spinner there after the water-wolves have had time to recover from their unceremonious treatment.

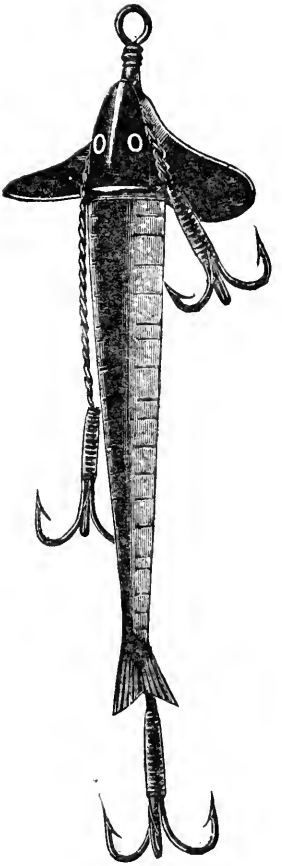
One often meets with pike in the summer in mill and weir streams. Here are to be seen clumps of weeds and sedges, old wood work, and boulders of various shapes and sizes with weeds growing round about them—all providing a harbour for pike, if they do not run large, as the water is not generally very deep. Providing the water is not too weedy, a spinner might be profitably employed here, or a live-bait floated down, while sundry little holes could be paternostered.

On account of their colouring often harmonizing with the surroundings, pike are not easy to "spot," even when of considerable dimensions. One day I found myself gazing down on what I thought was the bough of a tree—it was dark green like the weeds, and perfectly motionless. Only a closer inspection disclosed an 8 lb. pike, and when I introduced a gudgeon to the pike, he promptly had it, and I had the pike!

Some anglers can discern fish much quicker than others, and one of the Thames professionals of my acquaintance has a marvellous eye for fish finding. When the water is bright, therefore, it pays an angler to have a look round, as it may result in the discovery,



Spinning Flight for Natural Bait.



Phantom Minnow. A Useful Size for Spinning for Pike.

half hidden by weeds, of fish which might otherwise be passed over.

There is a chance then of getting in close touch with these pike by a judicious direction of tackle and bait.

When the autumn arrives, the pike often receives notice to quit, as it were, from his summer abode—some secluded and shady retreat, perhaps, among sedges and weeds, and hard by a nice clear open bit of water frequented, all unaware of the lurking danger in their midst, by roach, dace, and other fish. The aquatic vegetation decays and the pike's hiding-place is gone.

The winter finds pike in the deepest water as a rule, whether it be in the open stream where there is a gentle run, or in some hole or lay-bye close to the bank. The bank holes hold the most pike probably in the cold months, and very cosy quarters they frequently are, overhung by some bush or old willow or just off a rush bed. Big pike often keep near the bottom in these deep holes, and anglers therefore should see that their live-bait is given a chance of "working" well down. Paternoster tackle is the best gear with which to fish holes of uncertain depth, and I have described how it may be used in another chapter. Of course all pike do not select the deepest holes and lay-ups for their G.H.Q., and quiet runs of medium depth ought always to be tried by the river angler, while quiet spots in lakes, although comparatively shallow, also harbour pike.

Having endeavoured to describe where anglers are likely to find the pike, I will next deal with the tackle for these voracious and sport-giving fish and the methods of capture.

THE PIKE FISHER'S OUTFIT

Pike are large, powerful fish, therefore everything in the tackle department requires to be thoroughly sound. My advice to the beginner or novice is to equip himself with the best tackle—that is, the best his pocket can afford.

Good tackle always pays for itself in the long run.

Rods

The rod is the first essential, and it is a good plan to select one which is suitable for various methods of pike fishing. There is a wide choice of rods, but as a guide to the novice I give what is known as the "specification" of a likely weapon: Butt and middle joint best selected East India cane, two tops—one long and one short—of greenheart, furnished with universal winch fittings, large snake or bridge rings, with revolving rings at butt and end of tops. If desired, the same rod can be fitted with porcelain rings. A good length for a pike rod is from 11 ft. to 12 ft., including the longer top joint mentioned.

A cheaper four-joint rod of mottled cane, double brazed, two tops, bronzed ferrules, upright rings and universal fittings for reel, may also be recommended to those who prefer a four-jointed weapon.

A better quality rod may be had with butt and middle of solid cane, two tops of best selected greenheart (one short top) full mounted, with cork handle, rubber button, serrated ferrules, revolving end rings, revolving ring on butt, snake rings, and bayonet jointed ferrules. There are still more expensive rods on the market, such as the built-cane ones, with patent

lockfast joints, agate rings, and other improvements, but, on the whole, the beginner will do quite as well with a medium-priced rod, which will generally prove capable of dealing with anything likely to come the way of the average pike angler. But beware of the cheap rod; its life is extremely short, and what you gain at the first outlay you will probably lose by having to purchase an early replacement, not to mention perhaps the loss of a big fish through a "smash."

It is well to remember that, when after pike, a large and game fish has to be dealt with. The bait of several ounces has to be cast a considerable distance at times, and when a "run" is experienced, the hooks have to be driven home into a hard jaw. With respect to striking, do not give a snappy jerk, but respond with a firm and deliberate strike.

Reels

Of pike-spinning reels there is a wide range, and the study of an up-to-date fishing tackle dealer's catalogue may assist the beginner in making his choice. The ordinary "Nottingham" pattern reel, of walnut wood, brass star back, optional check and line guard, is both cheap and effective. It is easy running and possesses a couple of firm handles. Another good reel is the centre-pin pattern, with optional check; while the "Allcock" aerial pattern reel of aluminium is splendid for spinning. It, too, has check action, and therefore can also be used for live-baiting and paternostering.

Lines

Pike lines vary in length. I remember when I caught my first pike—a 5-pounder—I had only 10

yards of silk roach line on my reel! That was in school-days, when pocket-money was none too plentiful. The pike angler's line should not be less than 50 yards in length—some anglers have from 60 yards to 100 yards of line on the reel. The line must be strong, but not too thick. I give the preference to a plaited line when it is undressed. It does not greatly matter whether a pike line is dressed or undressed, but there is little doubt that a soft and pliable dressed line is the better and lasts longer—it also fishes cleaner.

Except when actually in use, it is not a bad plan to draw the line from the reel and let it hang in long loose loops in a dry place. Dressed lines should be rubbed down occasionally with a bit of mutton-fat or deer's-fat. Failing that, a little pure vaseline rubbed along the line with a bit of flannel will answer. Lines should always be greased before use. When returned from a day's angling, do not fail to thoroughly dry your line. A line-dryer can easily be constructed; an old picture frame will answer the purpose, failing anything better. Good line driers can be purchased for a few shillings. Pike lines may be obtained in white, speckled, or green. It matters little about the colour; although white looks very conspicuous at first, it quickly tones down after use. Try to get a line that, whilst smooth and pliable, is free from any suspicion of stickiness. Nothing is more annoying than a sticky line, and nothing harder to cure. Undressed silk lines are quite good, but great care must be exercised in thoroughly drying them after use, or they quickly rot. Undressed lines should be greased with "Mucilin," vaseline, or some other preparation, rubbed in with a bit of flannel; other-

wise they have a tendency to sink in the water when in use.

Traces

The spinning trace should be about 1¼ yards in length to 1½ yards. Traces suitable for pike are to be had either of twisted or single gut, silk gimp, wire gimp, or annealed steel wire. The trace should be complete with a swivel at the end next to the reel line, and at the other end a swivel and loop to which is attached the spinning bait. If preferred, you can purchase a trace complete with both swivels and lead. You will require leads for your trace, if unsupplied. There are various patterns—barrel, spiral straight, spiral curved, leads with wire loops, etc. Whichever pattern is adopted, it should be simple in attachment, so that it can be easily put on the line and as readily taken off. Swivels on spinning traces, flights, and baits should be slightly oiled occasionally, but all superfluous oil must be carefully wiped away before storing.

HOW TO CATCH PIKE

Methods of Angling

Pike are taken by spinning with an artificial or natural bait, live-baiting with snap-tackle, and live-baiting with a paternoster. Some anglers also leger for those fish with a live dace, gudgeon, or other small fish.

Baits

I will deal first with the artificial lures for spinning, of which there are many, all more or less killing.

Most of these baits are intended to represent a dace, roach, bleak, gudgeon, minnow, etc. In addition we have spoons and spinners of various kinds. In respect to artificials, spoons may be given first place. A spoon, silvered on the outside and painted red on the inner surface, may be recommended. Many spoons have a red tassel attached. The pike, however, being a capricious fellow, may be just as easily pleased with a phantom, Devon, or wagtail. The variety of these artificial baits is exceedingly large. Devon and quill minnows are attractive, so are the "Nature" baits, representing various fishes. If we glance through the pages of a fishing-tackle catalogue, we note a wide range of baits, made of celluloid, horn, soleskin, and other materials—a really artistic display of different designs and colours. All inventors appear to have recognized one thing and acted upon it, i.e. that pike are attracted by brilliant hues. Therefore, we find the majority of artificials resplendent in bright reds, blues, gold, and silver.

All artificials, no matter what design, will attract pike under certain conditions of water, weather, and circumstances. It is at least very doubtful if a pike refuses one bait that he is more likely to be attracted by another. At the same time, it is as well to change your bait if the pike are unresponsive to your first choice. In hungry mood, this fish will take anything almost—in dour frame of mind we may exhaust our patience by making unsuccessful attempts to attract fish that for some reason will not budge.

As in many other branches of angling, persistency is the keynote of success when spinning. A pike may follow a bait nine times without taking it, and at the

tenth time of asking snap it up eagerly. A likely time to use the artificial is when the river is fining down after a good flush of rain. All the quiet corners, the deeper holes under the banks and lay-byes, the slack water at the tail of an island, and similar spots may be tried. The artificial is also killing at times when the water is on the rise. When the water is low and clear, the artificial spun just on dusk will often account for a good fish. The rough and broken water of the weir-pool, especially where obstructions break the force of the stream, is a likely place to try the imitation. Good days for spinning are those when a fairly fresh breeze makes little wavelets on the surface. Water five to six feet deep is the best.

Spinning—The "Wobble" Spin

In the list of natural dead baits, sprats, smelts, roach, dace, bleak, gudgeon, or minnows will all serve their turn. In spinning the dead bait, which is attached to a flight of hooks, the angler casts from boat or bank, and slowly draws home, working as much water as possible in one spot before moving on. Never wind in too rapidly. Better results may be obtained by allowing the bait to sink pretty deeply in the water, and then winding in slowly, slightly moving the rod top at the same time, thereby imparting a "wobbling" motion to the bait. The idea of spinning with a dead bait is to represent a wounded fish trying to escape. A too straight and mechanical spin tends to spoil the effect. To induce the bait to "wobble," it is necessary to curl the tail when adjusting it upon the flight. Endeavour to keep the bait

just moving and spinning, as though it were a small fish in trouble.

An important thing to consider is the hook-tackle. There are numerous flights and spinners on the market. Of these the "Francis" flight, the "Pennell," the "Bromley," etc., are all made in three sizes: No. 1 for small gudgeon or dace from 3 in. to 4 in. long; No. 2 for larger baits from 5 in. to 6 in. long; No. 3 for dace of 6 in. to 7 in. long, being the size of hook-flights for pike ranging from 10 lb. upwards. The above are good and useful patterns.

Where the angler who is beginning to angle for pike experiences difficulty in putting a natural bait on a flight so that it spins properly and attractively, he will find it to his advantage to use a spinner. The "Archer" spinner and the "Abbey Mills" spinner are both capital tackles for dead-bait, being quickly and easily baited. The "Chapman" and "Coxon" spinners are also to be recommended. An excellent spinning flight is the "Cholmondeley-Pennell" pattern. This is a single triangle, with several good points to commend it, not the least being the immunity it has from catching in weeds and subaqueous plants, owing to there being no external triangles. It is very easily baited.

Besides the several flights and spinners mentioned, there are many others, with single, double, and treble hooks. To give the best results, the gimp should be threaded through the bait, the flight itself should be simple, and the hooks should not be too large or too many. The chief point is to show as little of the tackle as possible; therefore the simpler the flight, the better results likely to be obtained.

Spinning is an art, and it requires quite a lot of practice before one can hope to become really proficient. Undoubtedly the best method for the beginner to adopt is to cast direct from the reel, beginning with the right-handed cast; and, having mastered this, one can go on to casting from the left-hand, the underhand cast, and other methods that may suggest themselves and be useful at times. When angling from a boat, many old hands cast with a coiled line; this may also be done from the bank if it is free from dead twigs and undergrowth. Some experts twine the coil round the fingers. The novice, however, will do well to leave such methods alone at first and confine himself to casting direct from the winch.

It is, of course, somewhat difficult to coach by print the beginner in casting. If he can persuade some old and experienced hand to give him a few lessons he will greatly benefit thereby, or even to accompany him and watch. Afterwards he can practise to his heart's content and improve his style to his own ideas as he acquires knowledge from experience. No two anglers cast quite alike.

The Way to Cast

In making the cast direct from the winch in what is called the "Nottingham" style with a plain reel, the rod is generally grasped with the right hand some 8 in. or 9 in. above the reel fittings, the reel having its handles to the right. The left hand clasps the rod over the winch fittings with the fingers pressing lightly on the revolving rim of the reel. You must be careful not to put too much pressure on, or when you come to propel the bait forward it will swing round and hit

the bank at your feet or bang you over the legs; but if the rim is released altogether, the winch will revolve too speedily, and overrunning of the line will result, so that a tangle becomes inevitable. Just sufficient pressure should be exerted to allow the bait to travel forward in a free and straight course.

Before attempting the cast, see that the trace is pulled clear of the top ring of the rod, the bait hanging down some 4 ft. or 5 ft. When your bait has reached the extreme backward point of its swing, bring the rod forward with a smart movement and propel the bait over the water, slightly releasing the fingers of your left hand from the revolving rim, but still keeping a little pressure on it. Drop the point of the rod as the bait nears the surface, and the instant it strikes the water, check it by "braking" the rim with your finger, which, while the line has been running out, is kept gently on the rim. All further revolutions must be stopped the moment the bait hits the surface, otherwise you will have overrunning of the line. It is necessary now to grasp the rod with the left hand, remove the right, and take hold of the reel handles (this, of course, applies to the right-handed cast). Now you are ready to wind home, but do not be in too big a hurry. Let the bait sink fairly deep—unless you are fishing in shallow or weedy water—and reel in steadily, so that the bait does not spin too quickly. By alternately raising and lowering the point of the rod while reeling in you may impart an attractive "wobbling" motion to your bait.

Do not put too much force behind your forward cast, or, if you are using a tender natural bait, it may strip from the hooks and go flying where it is not in-

tended to. Too much force, also, often leads to entanglements. Practice alone will bring perfection. You are bound to have trouble at first, but by perseverance you will soon get the knack of swinging the bait forward at the right second, checking the reel by pressure of the finger when the bait hits the water, and instantly bringing the right hand down to grasp the reel handles, at the same time gripping the rod with the left hand, which hitherto has been regulating the revolving of the winch. Having accomplished so much, you can practise other casts as opportunity occurs. Remember, the larger the bait, the more pressure is required to regulate the revolving of the reel; the lighter the bait, the more force needed to cast it to the required spot. Do not forget to lower the point of the rod, especially when spinning over shallow places.

Spinning may be carried out in both running and still waters, providing the latter are clear from weeds. In fact, wherever there is anything like a clear space to work, the spinner may be tried. From September until the following January is the best period.

Live-baiting

Although not so sportsmanlike and artistic as spinning, live-baiting for pike is a very killing method, and may be employed in rivers, lakes, drains, ponds, and all waters where pike are to be found. Live-baiting is followed in three ways, viz. float-fishing with single hook or snap-tackle, paternostering, and legering. Snap-fishing with float tackle is largely practised. The rod for this style of pike angling is used with the short top. You will require a fair-sized float,

about the size of a pullet's egg, a trace or gut collar with a lead sinker, and the hook tackle. Floats are of various patterns and sizes to suit the size of baits and depth of water. A 2 in. float for small baits and a 3 in. for larger ones will suffice. Some pike-anglers also employ one or two small " pilot " floats, placed a few feet from the main float to prevent the line from sinking and becoming entangled with the tackle. The trace of gimp or wire, or a yard or so of stout salmon-gut, should have a loop at one end and a buckle swivel at the other. Above the swivel place the lead, the swivel and lead to be anything from a foot to twenty inches above the bait.

Putting the Live-bait On

Snap-tackles are many and various. One of the best is the " Jardine " snap ; the " Bickerdyke " is also good. The former consists of two treble hooks fastened a few inches from each other on a length of gimp, one hook on each treble being smaller than the others, these smaller hooks being used to hold the bait. To bait, the top small hook of the first triangle is carefully inserted at the forward end of the dorsal fin of the dace or other fish, and the reverse hook of the lower treble is passed through the skin behind the pectoral fin. One of the trebles is movable, so that the snap can be adjusted according to the size of the bait.

Some anglers prefer a single hook or a double hook on gimp. Certainly there is less tackle for the fish to see, and this is a consideration when live-baiting. When using the single hook, it is passed through the lips of the bait. Unlike fishing with the " snap," with

which the angler should strike immediately he gets a run, he must give the pike a few seconds in which to turn the bait in its mouth before he drives the hook home. In angling with the snap-tackle or single hook the floats should be so adjusted that the bait swims between two and three feet from the bottom.

The best spots for live-baiting in rivers are corners and eddies clear from weeds, eddies under the bank, the quieter parts, holes where the water pauses after running over a longish scour; weir-pools and the streamy runs of a mill-tail should be floated over. In lakes the live-bait may be used near sluices, in deep water, clear spaces between weed-beds and water-lilies. It is always advisable to fish fairly deep, especially if after big fish. In winter pike invariably lurk deeper than during summer, when they lie amongst the weeds.

Dace, roach, gudgeon, bleak, and gold-fish are all good lures. Minnows are also an attraction; before to-day very large pike have been taken with a plump minnow. Never maul a bait more than can be helped when impaling it upon the hook or hooks; the livelier a bait works, the more attractive it is.

Paternostering

This is a very deadly method. The paternoster is simply a length of gimp or stout salmon-gut with a weight at the end, usually a pear-shaped lead, and one or more sets of hooks higher up the line. The hooks themselves are on a short length of gimp, and may be either snap-tackle or large single hooks; the latter for very small baits. The bait is hooked through both lips as in float-fishing, and, if using snap-tackle,

in the manner already described. If the snap is provided with a lip hook, this is passed through the lips of bait, and the small hook of the treble is fixed lightly just behind the back fin. When paternostering, it is essential to keep a tight line, so that the fish can be struck immediately he makes a run. A paternoster may be worked in all sorts of nooks and corners, letting the lead sink to the bottom each time. A paternoster should be kept constantly on the move. When using a snap, strike immediately a fish is felt; if a single hook, give him time to turn the bait in his mouth as he is moving off. This method may be advantageously used at all depths, and is eminently suited to weedy places. Mr. Rolt has invented a special pike paternoster tackle which is used with floats; for the ordinary paternoster no float is required. The "Jardine" paternoster is also useful, and Allcock's "Invisible Straight Pull Pike Paternoster."

Work a paternoster by the edge of weeds, rushes, and by old weirs and wood piles, under old tree roots, and down the quiet eddies and the holes and corners under the banks, always fishing the water nearest to you first, then searching the remainder as far as possible.

Legering

Legering is another good way of catching pike. The same tackle as used for float-fishing, minus the float, may be used, with the addition of a length of gimp or gut below the lead, to which the hook or hooks are attached. Or you may use a short length of stout gut or gimp with a lead bullet about 1 oz. in weight. To this trace, about 2 ft. apart, attach a couple of

split shot, with the lead in between, fixed so that it will run freely between the shots. A single hook or a snap, baited as already described with a lively dace, is the thing for legering. The bait should be some 20 in. or so below the lead, so that it may work in various directions as far as the weight will allow. Legering is a good method in deep and quiet waters.

Pike may at times be tempted with a fly, usually a gaudy collection of feathers and tinsel, with plenty of red and blue in the make-up. Such a contraption should be allowed to sink and then be drawn slowly through the water.

For his live-baits the angler will require a bait-kettle. It should be fitted with a removable perforated interior, or a sliding perforated tray, which can be lifted up when a fish is required. It is much better to have a bait-kettle with removable perforated inner kettle, as it saves groping round with the hands in cold water when a fresh bait is required.

Printed by Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ld., London and Aylesbury.

"COUNTRY LIFE" BOOKLETS

9d. each net; by post, 11d.

VEGETABLE GROWING. By HERBERT COWLEY. 3rd Impression.
STORING VEGETABLES AND FRUITS. By HERBERT COWLEY.
THE GREENHOUSE. By W. TRUELOVE.
ANTIRRHINUMS AND PENTSTEMONS. By A. J. MACSELF.
RABBIT-KEEPING. By C. J. DAVIES. 8th Impression.
GOAT-KEEPING. By C. J. DAVIES. 2nd Impression.
PIG-KEEPING. By C. J. DAVIES. 2nd Impression.
BEE-KEEPING. By W. HERROD-HEMPSALL. 2nd Impression.
POULTRY-FEEDING. By WILL HOOLEY, F.Z.S. 4th Impression.
WINTER EGG PRODUCTION. By WILL HOOLEY, F.Z.S.
DUCKS, GEESE, AND TURKEYS. By WILL HOOLEY, F.Z.S.
CULTIVATION IN MOVABLE FRAMES. By HERBERT COWLEY.
HOME-MADE PICKLES AND PRESERVES. Recipes New and Old. Collected by ANNE AMATEUR. 3rd Edition.
HOME-BREWED WINES AND UNFERMENTED BEVERAGES. By ANNE AMATEUR.
HOME DECORATING. By A. WILLIAMS.
CAKES AND PASTRIES. By J. T. WILLIAMS.
FRUIT BOTTLING AND PRESERVING. Practical and homely recipes. By MRS. EDWIN BECKETT. 3rd Edition.
PRACTICAL CAVY-KEEPING. With a Chapter on the profitable Breeding of Fancy Mice. By J. T. BIRD.
THE DOG. By W. CROXTON SMITH.
CANARY-KEEPING. By H. NORMAN.
FLYING HOMER PIGEONS. By A. J. MACSELF.
LAWN TENNIS HINTS. By F. R. BURROW. 4th Edition.
BOWLS. By G. T. BURROWS. **1s.** net.
HOCKEY. By R. C. LYLE.
GOLF: Some Hints and Suggestions. By BERNARD DARWIN.
ECONOMICAL MOTORING. By HAROLD JOHNSON.
CROQUET. By C. LOCOCK.
BILLIARDS. By F. M. CARRUTHERS.
HOW TO CATCH COARSE FISH. By A. R. MATTHEWS. **1s.** net.

Nearly Ready.

PANSIES AND VIOLAS. By HOWARD H. CRANE, F.L.S.
HOW TO PRUNE ROSES AND FRUIT TREES. By OWEN THOMAS, V.M.H.
BORDER CARNATIONS. By JAMES DOUGLAS.
SWEET PEAS. By HORACE J. WRIGHT.
POT PLANTS. By W. TRUELOVE.
HOW TO KNOW THE STARS. By W. H. GURNEY.
HOW TO KNOW THE BIRDS. By W. H. GURNEY.
HOW TO KNOW THE COMMONER BRITISH BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS. By W. H. GURNEY.

ANGLING FOR PIKE

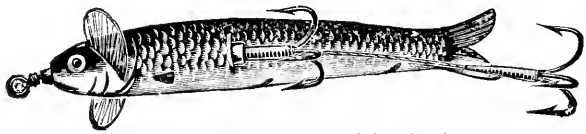
Rods, Reels, Lines, Baits and Tackle of all kinds for Pike and Coarse Fishing, also Salmon and Trout Fishing.

CATALOGUES FREE

L. KEEGAN, Fishing Tackle Manufacturer,
3 INNS QUAY, DUBLIN

HOW TO CATCH PIKE

Use PERCY WADHAM'S famous O.K. Gudgeon



Pike cannot resist this life-like bait

1½	1¾	2	2¼	2½	2¾	3	3½	4	4½	5 in.
2/3	**2/6**	**2/6**	**3/-**	**3/-**	**3/6**	**3/6**	**4/-**	**4/3**	**4/9**	**5/-**

Supplied with Transparent Spinning Fins

Send for our latest Catalogue (C—Feb. 1920)

PERCY WADHAM'S SPECIALITIES, Ltd.
NEWPORT, I.W.

THE LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

3 1158 01304 5199

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
AA 000 972 698 5

SH
439
M43hp